

REMARKS

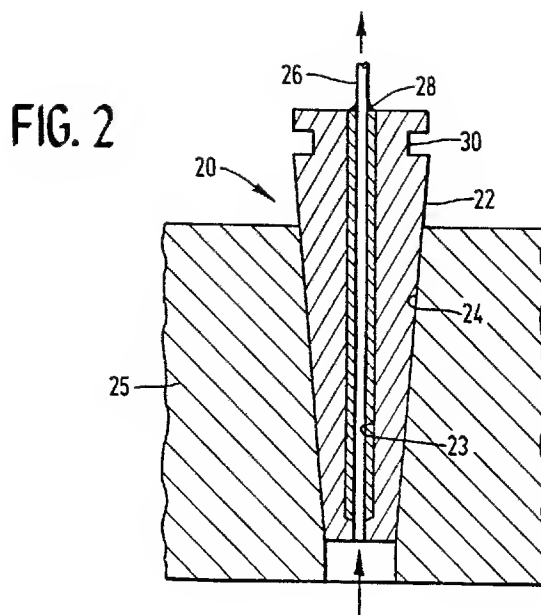
Claims 1, 5, 7, 10 and 21 have been amended, and claims 30-31 have been added herein. Claims 1, 3, 5, 7-13, 21 and 30-31 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in light of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

Sections 1-2 of the office action rejected claims 1, 3-7, 9-13, 21 and 24-26 under 35 USC 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,253,520 to Drexel et al (“Drexel”). Claims 24-26 have been canceled herein, rendering those rejections moot. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections of the remaining claims.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 4, which has been canceled. Thus, as amended, claim 1 includes a nipple defined by the second side of the base member. Claim 1 has further been amended to note that the nipple extends from the second side of the base member, and at least a portion of the second segment of the opening is situated within the nipple. Claim 21 has also been amended to include these limitations regarding the nipple extending from the second side.

Section 2.C. of the office action references Figure 2 of Drexel as disclosing a nipple defined by the second side of the base member 22. Figure 2 of Drexel is reproduced below:



As shown in Figure 2 of Drexel, the second (bottom) side of the “base member” 22, 25 has no nipple, or anything else, extending from the second side of the base member. The second (lower) segment of the opening 23 clearly is not situated in any portion of the base member 22,25 that extends from the second side of the base member.

Drexel fails to disclose each element of claims 1 and 21. It therefore cannot anticipate claims 1 or 21, nor any claims dependent thereon.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Sections 3-4 of the office action rejected claim 8 as allegedly being unpatentable over Drexel. Since claims 8 depends from claim 1, it is patentable for at least the reasons noted above.

New claims

New claims 30 and 31 have been added herein. Claim 30 includes a groove defining a raised boss in the base member, similar to that recited in claim 10. With respect to claim 10, section 2.G. of the office referenced the groove 30 shown in Figure 2 of Drexel (reproduced above). In the Drexel disclosure, the groove 30 is actually in a taper pin 22 received by the base 25: “The taper pin 22 is press fit into a matched, frusto-conical taper bore 24, in a connector base 25.... Disconnection of the taper pin is facilitated by a removal groove 30.” Col. 3, ll. 36-61.

Claim 30 recites “a base member having first and second generally opposing sides, the first and second sides defining corresponding generally planar first and second parallel surfaces ... [and] a groove defined in the first surface of the base member surrounding the opening creating a raised boss adjacent the opening.”

The groove 30 disclosed in Drexel is clearly not defined by the planar surface of the first side of the base member. New claim 30, and new claim 31 dependent thereon, is therefore allowable over Drexel.

Conclusion

As evidenced by the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants have made a genuine effort to respond to each issue raised in the office action. All of the pending claims are believed to be proper for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney at 952.474.3701 with any questions, comments or suggestions relating to the referenced patent application.

Respectfully submitted,

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